

United Sidecar Association

Newsletter No. 18

January 1978

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GREETINGS FOR THE NEW YEAR

Polar Bear Run

The Polar Bear Run came and went - but, where were you? We (Hal and Lee, Ed Johnson, Al Johnson and Tim Colburn) met at Lassen's Tavern and then enjoyed a delightful run to Frankfort on schedule. The weather was much warmer than we had on the 1977 Polar Bear Run. Boy, was that frigid.

Next Meeting

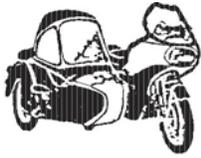
Ed Johnson and Joe Veleta have an exciting program planned for 1978. Come and join us at the Cookoo's Nest in Monee, February 11, at 11:00 A.M. and see what surprises we have in store.

Toll Booths

There have been some successes at the toll booths but unfortunately not in Illinois. Gary Winn of the A.M.A. was responsible for getting Florida to reverse their ruling of charging a motorcycle with sidecar at a three axle rate and I was able to convince Oklahoma to do the same. Both States now charge sidecarist the two-axle rate. So you see, governmental officials will listen if you have a valid case. In Illinois we still need your help to repeal the lights-on law and to reverse the three axle rate for sidecars on the toll-ways.

Club Dues

It is time for club dues. In spite of inflationary costs, we have put a lid on expenses and reduced dues in some cases. Family membership and single male dues remain at \$10.00 per year. Female member's dues are \$5.00 per year - out of State members and members who live more than 100 miles from Chicago, will benefit from the reduced membership fee of \$5.00 per year. Please bring your subscriptions to the February meeting or mail to the Secretary no later than February 28, 1978. This will allow us to balance our budget permitting financial planning for 1978.



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Misconceptions by sidecarists

A good sidecar a “light” sidecar

One is the lighter the sidecar, the better. This is not necessarily true. The sidecar has to be heavy enough, in relation to the bike's weight, so the outfit can be operated safely when the side-car is unladen. If too light, it will rear up every time you turn into a right-hander at any speed faster than a crawl. If the sidecar is too heavy the bike will not handle properly and braking will be difficult. A Ural M66, for example, can be mated to a BMW R75 or heavier but do not hang it on a Honda 350. And a Bingham Mark I is not for a Kawa Z-1.

Bike frames must always be modified

Another misconception is that major modification must be made to the frame of all motorcycles to accommodate a chair. Again, not necessarily so. Normally a sub-frame can be bolted strategically to the main frame to accommodate the sidecar fittings. Universal fittings are available for most frames. It is always advisable where possible, to select attachment points that will transfer loads equally to both sides of a duplex frame. Some fittings will allow load distribution on both sides of the frame.

The best suspension has the softest springs

Another misconception is that the best springing is the softest to absorb bumps. Not true unless you plan to travel in a straight line only. Turning forces cause the outfit to lean in the opposite direction you are turning. The softer the suspension the more the lean and the more you need to fight your way around the corner. The best suspension, front, rear and sidecar wheel, is the lightest that is acceptable for your creature comfort. But, remember, the stiffer the sidecar wheel suspension, the more shock loads will be transmitted back through the side-car frame to the motorcycle frame.

Sidecar wheel lead

The location of the sidecar wheel gives us the problem at the toll booths. If it was in line with the rear axle, the sidecar loading would be too much at the rear and steering would be too light but turns to the left will be easier. If too far forward, steering in general will be heavier, especially to the left but weight distribution will be better. The best compromise appears to be with the sidecar wheel leading the rear wheel from 6 to 12 inches. One **very** novel feature used on the latest generation of racing outfits is to cause the sidecar wheel to steer with the front wheel.

Let's keep those technical tips rolling in.

Hal Kendall, Secretary
United Sidecar Association